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FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8868

UNCLAS TUNIS 000139

E.O. 12356: N/A
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SUBJECT: BEN ALI LETTER TO CLINTON

11. IN A JANUARY 9 MEETING WITH MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR AMERICAS AFFAIRS AHMED OUNIAES, POLCOUNS WAS GIVEN A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT BEN ALI TO PRESIDENT CLINTON. THE TUNISIAN ENGLISH TRANSLATION FOLLOWS. THE ORIGINAL TEXT (ARABIC AND ENGLISH TRANSLATION) WILL BE FORWARDED VIA POUCH TO NEA/MAG.

12. BEGIN TEXT:

I RECEIVED WITH GREAT PLEASURE YOUR LETTER DATED 29 NOVEMBER 1994, IN WHICH YOU INFORMED ME OF THE UNITED STATES' PROPOSAL TO INVITE THE PARTIES TO THE MIDDLE EAST PROCESS TO A MEETING TO BE HELD IN WASHINGTON ON 10-11 JANUARY 1995, AS A FOLLOW UP TO THE DISCUSSIONS INITIATED AT THE RECENT CASABLANCA ECONOMIC SUMMIT, WITH THE AIM OF SETTING UP A REGIONAL BANK FOR DEVELOPMENT IN NORTH AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST.

HAVING STEADFASTLY SUPPORTED THE MIDDLE EAST PEACE PROCESS AT EVERY STAGE AND HAVING CONTRIBUTED TO EFFORTS AIMED AT BUILDING MUTUAL CONFIDENCE AND CONCORD BETWEEN THE PARTIES CONCERNED AND PROMOTING AN AREA OF STABILITY AND PEACE, TUNISIA APPRECIATES THE INITIATIVE OF CREATING THIS FINANCIAL INSTITUTION. WE BELIEVE THIS WILL BE AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THE FULFILLMENT OF OUR AIMS: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW REGIONAL ORDER IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND THE ARAB MAGHREB BASED ON COOPERATION AND THE PARTICIPATION OF ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE REGION IN THEIR EFFORTS FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT.

WHILE SUPPORTING AND SETTING UP A REGIONAL BANK FOR DEVELOPMENT AND EXPRESSING OUR READINESS TO CONTRIBUTE EFFECTIVELY TO THE REALIZATION OF THIS PROJECT, WE WELCOME THE INVITATION OF TUNISIA BY THE UNITED STATES TO THE AFOREMENTIONED PREPARATORY WASHINGTON MEETING. TUNISIA WILL BE REPRESENTED BY TWO OF ITS HIGH OFFICIALS WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN EXAMINING POLITICAL AND TECHNICAL ISSUES RELATED TO THE CREATION OF THE INSTITUTION.

HAVING PUT FORWARD A NUMBER OF INITIATIVES AIMED AT PROMOTING THE PEACE PROCESS AND ANXIOUS TO PURSUE ITS ACTIVE ROLE IN THE RECONSTRUCTION OF GAZA AND JERICHO AND THE REGION AS A WHOLE AND IN BRINGING THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS BETWEEN THE ARAB COUNTRIES AND ISRAEL TO MATURITY, TUNISIA IS DETERMINED TO CONTRIBUTE IN ESTABLISHING THE STRUCTURES AND NECESSARY MECHANISMS TO SET UP A NEW REGIONAL ORDER WHICH WILL HASTEN THE CONCLUSION OF THE PEACE PROCESS AND PUT AN END TO THE VICIOUS CIRCLE OF VIOLENCE AND TERRORISM AS WELL AS ALL SOURCES OF CONFRONTATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST; THUS ALLOWING FOR GREATER EFFORTS IN FAVOR OF DEVELOPMENT.

WHILE PREPARING FOR THE WASHINGTON MEETING WHICH WILL PRESENT US WITH AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE VIEWS AND HAVE MORE DETAILED DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE VARIOUS TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THIS PROJECT, TUNISIA EXPRESSES THE HOPE THAT THIS BANK WILL PLAY AN ACTIVE ROLE IN ASSISTING THE COUNTRIES OF THE REGION IN PROMOTING INVESTMENTS AND INCREASING PRODUCTION.

ALL PEACE LOVING COUNTRIES AS WELL AS INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC INSTITUTIONS SHOULD TAKE IT UPON THEMSELVES TO SUPPORT INITIATIVES

FOR DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION TO ANCHOR PEACE
THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURITY, STABILITY AND
PROSPERITY FOR ALL.

PLEASE ACCEPT, MR. PRESIDENT, THE EXPRESSION OF MY
HIGHEST CONSIDERATION AND BEST REGARDS.

ZINE EL ABIDINE BEN ALI
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TUNISIA

STOCKER